

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PONTA 00095 241821Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00
DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 MCT-01
/055 W

-----241827Z 083554 /47

R 241315Z MAR 77
FM AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1643
INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMCONSUL OPORTO
COMUSFORAZ
USCINCEUR
CINCLANT

C O N F I D E N T I A L PONTA DELGADA 0095

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PO
SUBJ: AZOREAN DEVELOPMENTS

1. INCREASED PRESIDENTIAL INTEREST IN AZORES: AFTER THE RECENT SUMMIT MEETING ON THE ISLANDS, MOTA AMARAL TOLD THE PRESS THE MEETING WOULD HAVE VERY IMPORTANT EFFECTS IN SPEEDING THE PROCESS OF REGIONALIZATION BECAUSE OF THE SPECIAL INTEREST EANES HAD DEMONSTRATED. THE REGIONAL PRESIDENT SAID HE WAS CONFIDENT THAT MANY OF THE PROBLEMS AND DELAYS HIS GOVERNMENT HAD ENCOUNTERED IN THE PAST WOULD DISAPPEAR. IN ADDITION TO MOTA AMARAL'S RECENT TALKS WITH THE PRESIDENT, EANES REQUESTED A MEETING WITH REGIONAL ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT MONJARDINO, WHO SAID LATER THAT THE PURPOSE OF THE PRIVATE TALKS WAS EANES' DESIRE TO INCREASE HIS CONTACTS AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE AZORES. THE REGIONAL GOVERNMENT'S PERCEPTION THAT IT HAS A SPECIAL CHANNEL TO THE PRESIDENT IS ILLUSTRATED BY THE RECENT COMMENT OF ONE OF THE REGIONAL SECRETARIES WHEN HE DISCOVERED A COMMUNICATIONS PROBLEM WITH LISBON. HE SAID HE WOULD BRING THE SITUATION IMMEDIATELY TO MOTA AMARAL'S

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ATTENTION SO HE COULD TAKE IT UP WITH THE PRESIDENT.

2. VIOLENCE OUTSIDE SAO MIGUEL: UNTIL THE LAST FEW WEEKS, THE VARIOUS INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE IN THE AZORES, LARGELY MINI-BOMBS, WERE CONFINED TO SAO MIGUEL. HOWEVER, RECENTLY THE VIOLENCE HAS SPREAD TO OTHER ISLANDS - TWO BOMBS ON TERCEIRA, AND A MINI-BOMB ON PICO NEXT TO THE SITE OF ONE OF FLA LEADER

ALMEIDA'S SPEECHES. IN ADDITION, ON FAIAL THERE WAS AN UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPT TO DESTROY THE SOCIALISTS' REGIONAL ASSEMBLY LEADER'S CAR. THIS PUTS AN END TO THE THEORY THE BOMBS ARE THE WORK OF A SMALL GROUP OF SEPARATISTS ON SAO MIGUEL. MOST OF THE VIOLENCE PROBABLY WAS THE WORK OF THE SEPARATISTS, BUT APPARENTLY NOT ALL OF IT.

3. FLA LEADERS CONDEMN GAMA FIRE: IN AN UNUSUAL MOVE, FLA LEADERS PAID FOR AN ANNOUNCEMENT IN THE LOCAL PRESS CONDEMNING THE FIRE AT JAIME GAMA'S HOUSE. IDENTIFYING THEMSELVES AS AZOREANS INTERESTED IN THE HISTORIC PROCESS OF LIBERATION, THEY SAID THEY FAVOR FIGHTING IDEAS WITH IDEAS AND CONDEMNED VEHEMENTLY ALL "GROUNDLESS" ACTS OF VIOLENCE WHICH "SERVE NO PURPOSE". THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THAT FLA LEADERS HAVE EVER ISSUED A SIGNED PUBLIC STATEMENT. JOSE ALMEIDA'S NAME AT THE HEAD OF THE LIST OF SIGNATORIES, WHICH INCLUDED HIS CLOSEST ASSOCIATES, CLEARLY IDENTIFIES THE GROUP EVEN THOUGH NEITHER "FLA" NOR "INDEPENDENCE" WAS USED IN THE STATEMENT. FLA HAS NEVER BEFORE COMMENTED ON VIOLENCE AND THE CAREFUL WORDING WHICH CONDEMNS ONLY "GROUNDLESS" ACTS OF VIOLENCE MAKES IT CLEAR THAT IT HAS NOT RENOUNCED VIOLENCE WHICH WOULD SERVE ITS PURPOSE. THIS UNUSUAL STATEMENT LENDS SOME CREDENCE TO ONE THEORY CIRCULATING HERE THAT THE FIRE AT GAMA'S HOUSE WAS PART OF A SERIES OF ANTI-INDEPENDENCE INCIDENTS WHICH TOOK PLACE IN FAIAL AND PICO IN REACTION TO ALMEIDA'S TRIP THERE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REPORTS, AZORES, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 24-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977PONTA00095
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770101-0524
Format: TEL
From: PONTA DELGADA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770326/aaaaawjc.tel
Line Count: 88
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 9cae61b2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01-Dec-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3008449
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AZOREAN DEVELOPMENTS
TAGS: PINT, PO
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/9cae61b2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009